



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 166

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2020

No. 51

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Thursday, March 19, 2020, at 9 a.m.

Senate

TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2020

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Lord of majesty, in spite of our challenges, Your glory and power continues to inspire us. We exalt Your Name, even when we are overwhelmed by the problems we face.

Lord, breathe Your strength and peace into our Senators and use them for Your glory. May they continue to totally depend on You, knowing that with Your mighty power You will surround them with the shield of Your blessing.

Holy God, Your goodness will prevail until the end of time.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate for 1 minute in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, as the coronavirus spreads, U.S. Federal health and intelligence agencies are working hard to protect the public. It is critical that their hard work not go to waste. Federal health agencies must have access to all intelligence community information that could help combat this pandemic. To help with that access, the intelligence community must guard against overclassifying information. In situations like this, information is power. Our Federal health and intelligence agencies are the best in the world. Let's show the world that America can stop the spread of this virus.

My tweet for the morning is this:

2day at 948AM we just received the bill from the House the "Families First Coronavirus Response Act" What business do democrats hv blaming McConnell all wknd for not calling a vote when we can't do anything until the House sends it over? They know better Stop the politics!

This is in response to 172 calls my office got yesterday wondering why we have not voted on this important bill. So it is important for me to remind everybody that the Senate can't pass this bill or even debate this bill until the House sends it over. We have now received it, and I assume we will soon do that.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, as the global outbreak of the new coronavirus continues to grow, its impact on American families and small businesses is continuing to scale up. School closures are challenging both parents and teachers. Childcare closures are complicating family life even further. Main Street small businesses and their employees are grappling with an unprecedented situation, where their local leaders are effectively winding down their businesses for a period of time through no fault of their own. Major industries that our Nation relies on have seen businesses virtually dry up overnight—again, not due to any business decision they made but because of appropriate directives from public health experts. And most important of all, our healthcare system and our doctors, nurses, and other frontline professionals are gearing up for what seems very likely to be the most significant nationwide challenge they have faced in generations. At every level, this new challenge is testing or Nation and our institutions.

Yesterday, my home State of Kentucky reported its first coronavirus-related death. Our thoughts are with the family, friends, and neighbors in Bourbon County, who are mourning.

I spoke with Governor Beshear yesterday, and we are continuing to stay in close touch. The Bluegrass has now confirmed 25 total cases to date.

And we are heeding the sober warning of Dr. Fauci. This is what Dr. Fauci said: "Things will get worse before they get better."

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

S1765